

From: Symmes, Brian <BrianSymmes@gov.sc.gov>  
To:  
Date: 12/30/2015 10:07:26 AM  
Subject: SC Front Pages – Wednesday, December 30, 2015

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**SC Front Pages – Wednesday, December 30, 2015**



METRO, 3A  
**AGENCIES  
TARGET DUI**



LIFESTYLE, 1D  
**A kid's  
drink  
grows up**

# The Greenville News

A GANNETT COMPANY

WEDNESDAY,  
DECEMBER 30, 2015  
GREENVILLEONLINE.COM



U.S. AIRSTRIKE KILLS ISIL FIGHTER LINKED TO PARIS ATTACK **PAGE 1B**



**ORANGE BOWL**  
**NO. 1 CLEMSON VS. NO. 4 OKLAHOMA**  
4 p.m. Thursday, Sun Life Stadium, Miami, TV: ESPN



## SIDELINED STAR

**Clemson receiver  
Carter dealt  
with lost season**

SCOTT KEEPER  
SKITTER@GANNETTNEWS.COM

CLEMSON - Chris Carter has some good advice when dealing with Mike Williams — namely, don't join him for a hand of cards.

"Mike has one of the best poker faces I've ever seen," Carter said.

That's a good thing, too, because Williams was dealt a bad hand before this most promising of football seasons had barely kicked off.

On the 12th play of Clemson's season-opening game against Wofford on Sept. 5, Williams reached high to catch a touchdown pass. He made the catch, but he also caught a good portion of the goal post support — with his head.



Mike Williams makes a TD catch before colliding with the goal post.

DAVE SQUATROCHI/STAFF

feel my body again and I told the trainers I wanted to get up and walk off the field.

"But they weren't going to take me

### A new role

When top-ranked and undefeated Clemson faces Oklahoma Thursday afternoon in the Orange Bowl, Williams

## S.C. traffic deaths are up

Gas and balmy weather  
contribute to increase

VERA BERGENGRUEN  
MCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

After years of near-historic lows, 2015 saw an abrupt spike in traffic fatalities on South Carolina's roads — partly due to an unlikely cause.

"We can't ignore the fact that as gas prices have decreased we have seen more people on the roads," S.C. Highway Patrol Sgt. Bob Burns said. "This doesn't necessarily mean we'll see a lot more collisions, but we will if people are making the wrong decision behind the wheel."

As of Monday, there had been 873 fatal crashes this year, compared with 744 in 2014. They had resulted in 942 deaths, compared with 813 in 2014, according to the S.C. Office of Highway Safety.

As the numbers continued to climb this year, South Carolina's public safety officers and Highway Patrol troopers expanded their outreach in old ways and new.

The week before Christmas, the state graduated 40 new troopers, bringing the total number to 772. They went straight to work during the busiest season of the year, as an esti-

See TRAFFIC Page 4A

**Mauldin fire  
caused by  
exploding  
hoverboard**  
Holiday toy continues  
causing issues

ANNA LEE  
LEE@GANNETTNEWS.COM

A hoverboard exploded and caught fire inside a Mauldin home Tuesday, fire officials said.

Firefighters responded to Windbrush Lane off Miller Road about 2:50 p.m. after getting a call about a structure fire, said Lt. Christopher Walker of the Mauldin Fire Department.

Walker said two teens at the home had gotten hoverboards for Christmas.

One teen had taken his board off charge when the battery's combusted and flew about 20 feet across the living room, lighting a chair on fire and burning the carpet, Walker said.

"The whole hoverboard exploded,"

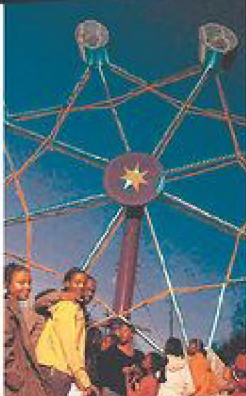




# The State



## COUNTDOWN TO NEW YEAR'S



### COLLEGE FOOTBALL

For the first time, the College Football Playoff semifinals will be played on New Year's Eve, a move that could change fans' plans considerably. Among those sure to love it are Clemson fans, who hope to see their perfect season crowned in an Orange Bowl showdown with the Oklahoma Sooners.

**NO. 1 CLEMSON (10-0) VS. NO. 4 OKLAHOMA (11-1)**

Where: Thursday, 4 p.m.

Where: Orange Bowl, Miami Gardens, Fla.

TV: ESPN

**NO. 2 ALABAMA (12-1) VS. NO. 3 MICHIGAN STATE (12-1)**

Where: Thursday, 8 p.m.

Where: Cotton Bowl, Arlington, Texas

TV: ESPN



### WWE NEWS

**Escalante Matchup:** Orange Bowl pits Clemson defensive coordinator Brent Venables, a former Sooner coach, against first-year Oklahoma offensive coordinator Lincoln Riley. **B**

**Season highlights:** Counting down the top 10 memorable moments from Clemson's 200 season. **B**

### FAMOUSLY HOT NEW YEAR'S

8 p.m.-1 a.m. at Main and Groves streets, downtown Columbia. Lauryn Hill, two-time Grammy winner, will perform in front of the S.C. State House - followed by a fireworks show. For the kids, there's a 30-foot Ferris Wheel, carnival games, ice skating and more. Free admission. Find a guide to the event at [www.thestate.com/guide/kids](http://www.thestate.com/guide/kids).

### NEW YEAR'S EVE AT NOON

9 a.m. to noon at Adventure Children's Museum. Count down to noon, when a giant illuminated ball descends and lands at the foot of Eddie. Lots of family fun on tap. Free with museum admission or membership. [www.edwardia.org](http://www.edwardia.org)

### BLYTHEWOOD'S NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

5-9 p.m. at Delta Meadows. Enjoy music by Freeway Music All Stars and food from Chuggery, Scillet's, Dale's Smoke and others. Bring the kids and a lawn chair and enjoy the fun with fireworks at 8:30 p.m., rain or shine. Free admission.

### WEATHER FORECAST

Cloudy with a slight chance of rain. Evening temperatures in the upper 50s.



**PalmReid:** The State's reporter Robert Reid's views on Clemson this past season. **W**

**Editorial:** Two men have led Clemson to the top of college football. **W**

### CHESTER COUNTY DEVELOPMENT

## \$1.6B mystery project gets OK

\$1.6 billion plant would be largest single investment in South Carolina

Company name to be released at groundbreaking ceremony

Plant is expected to create about 1,400 jobs

BY EDON WACHSBERG  
[edonwachsb@thefirststate.com](mailto:edonwachsb@thefirststate.com)

### CHESTER

The Chester County Council approved giving tax breaks Tuesday as part of an economic development package to bring a \$1.6 billion manufacturing facility to the county.

The council, without discussion, approved an ordinance for "Project 1429" which could employ as many as 1,400 people.

County officials declined to identify the company or to say where the plant will be built. They said the information will be made public by the company at a February or March groundbreaking ceremony that will likely be attended by Gov. Nikki Haley.

Before approving the ordinance to grant tax incentives, the council held a public hearing on the project. The only information provided before the meeting for residents was its potential investment and jobs it would create and that it was a cellulosic renewable diesel facility.

SEE CHESTER PLANT, 7A



### LOCAL

### NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS SEEK COOPERATION

Three Columbia City Council members were sworn in Tuesday amid calls for more unity on the council. **3A**



### USC MEN'S BASKETBALL LONG BALL GOING A LONG WAY

Improved 3-point shooting helping

Wet, warm end to 2015 in Columbia, but cooler in January

River, which will swell levels in Lake Murray. SCE&G, which operates the Lake Murray Dam, is able

# Aiken Standard

YOUR LOCAL NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1867

WEDNESDAY, December 30, 2015

AIKENSTANDARD.COM

Vol. 149, No. 364 Aiken, S.C. ★ ★ 75¢

## Top stories of 2015



STAFF FILE PHOTO BY TEDDY KUMALA

No. 8 — Public Safety officers, including Cpl. Matt Bramlett, left, and Public Safety Officer Marquis Davis, were among those in the crowded courtroom Feb. 2 when Stephen Carter pleaded guilty to the 2011 murder of Master Public Safety Officer Scotty Richardson.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

No. 6 — Pictured are Justin Craven, left, and Ernest Satterwhite Sr.



STAFF FILE PHOTO BY TEDDY KUMALA

No. 8 — Solicitor J. Strom Thurmond Jr., center, Chief Charles Barranco, left, and Sheriff Michael Hunt address reporters after Stephen Carter's guilty plea on Feb. 2.



AP PHOTO/SCOTT APPLEWHITE

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, of Kentucky, gestures during an interview with The Associated Press in his office in Washington, D.C.

## What did Congress do in 2015? Education and transportation highlight year

BY MATTHEW DALY  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In a chaotic year, when Republicans in the House unseated a speaker, Congress produced a significant amount of bipartisan legislation that affects every American.

It enacted laws recasting federal education policy, restricting government access to bulk phone records, cutting highway and transit programs and even resolving a long-standing problem of how Medicare reimburses doctors. Before leaving town for the year, it sent President Barack Obama bipartisan legislation: Friday finance government agencies in 2016 and cutting taxes, mostly by extending dozens of expiring provisions.

Here are highlights of an eventful year in Congress:

### Budget deal

A \$1.1 trillion spending bill approved Friday funds the government for the 2016 budget year and extends \$680 billion in tax cuts for businesses and individuals. The deal — a victory for new House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis. — avoids a government shutdown, allows crude oil exports for the first time in 40 years and extends a huge variety of tax breaks, including those for college tuition and renewable energy such as solar and wind power.

### Education

Obama signed a sweeping overhaul of the No Child Left Behind education law, the biggest education reform since 2002. The bipartisan law shifts in a new approach to accountability, teacher evaluations and the way the most poorly performing schools are pushed to improve. Students will still take federally required statewide reading and math exams, but the law encourages states to limit time

Please see CONGRESS, Page 12 A

## From SRNS to dashcam footage, Standard reviews popular topics

### STAFF REPORTS

editorial@aikenstandard.com

This year's important news stories captivated readers not just on the local level, but the state and national level as well.

From the election of Aiken's first new mayor in 24 years to the relocation of the Confederate battle flag on the South Carolina Statehouse grounds to the fight to gain access to video footage reportedly showing a police officer fatally shooting an unarmed man, *Aiken Standard* staffers chased down leads and uncovered details to keep readers informed.

Today, the *Aiken Standard* begins its countdown of the Top 10 Local Stories of the Year. Here are stories 10 through six.

On Thursday, the *Aiken Standard* will reveal stories five through one.



STAFF FILE PHOTO BY GILL BERGSTROM

No. 9 — Officials accessed Langley Dam after a leak was discovered in the structure. As 2015 draws to a close, the fate of Langley Dam and its repairs lie in the hands of the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control.

National Lab, H Canyon, and several other facilities and missions exited the pause and entered deliberate operations, a reduced work phase during which workers pay close attention to detail.

The last facility operated by SRNS to exit the safety pause was H3 Line — a facility that assists the site's H Canyon in the processing of nuclear materials and the location of the plutonium storage incident.

H Canyon and H3 Line are expected to be the last facilities to exit deliberate operations with an exit projection scheduled for late January.

No. 9 — Langley Dam awaiting word on repair work

No. 9 — Langley Dam awaiting word on repair work

Not much has changed in regard to a plan of action for Langley Pond and Dam as 2015 draws to a close.

Please see STORIES, Page 12 A

### No. 10 — SRNS safety pause

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, or SRNS, induced a safety pause on Sept. 11 after a Sept. 3 plutonium storage incident. Four workers improperly stored plutonium in a sample container not suitable for storage.

The incident came after several other safety-related incidents, which caused SRNS to freeze work on all nonessential missions and facilities.

Throughout the months of September, October and November, the Savannah River

### AREA DEATHS

Anne Wynne McMichael, Aiken  
David Anthony Jackson, Langley  
Georgia  
Janet B. Kight, New Ellenton  
Janice Plunkett Banks, Warrenville  
Mae Bell Smith, Aiken  
Morris B. Rayas, Aiken  
Deaths and Funerals, 6A

### WEATHER

## County officials give voice to abused animals



BY CHRISTINA CLEVELAND  
cleveland@aikenstandard.com

It was only in August when the last of three dogs, victims of animal cruelty in McCormick County, found its forever home by way of the SPCA Albright Center for Animal Welfare in Aiken.

The dogs were found with their muzzles taped shut and later rescued from the Humane Society of McCormick County and its local shelters.

Officer Alan Walling, who handles animal control for the City of Aiken, the case involved an elderly man whose barking dogs led to neighbor complaints and him ultimately taking them up. Media outlets later reported the former owner was charged with animal cruelty.

"He thought he was doing right," based on the complaint of his neighbors, the dogs hushed and everyone's happy — but no, they're not," Walling says. "The dogs were 'barking'."





## MCVEY IS TOP PREP GIRLS SWIMMER

SPORTS, B1



## OVERTURNED TRUCK CLOSES I-85 RAMP

UPSTATE, C1

# Herald-Journal

SPARTANBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA

Wednesday, December 30, 2015



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**TODAY** **THU** **FRI**  
  
65°/54° 66°/48° 55°/35°  
Complete forecast, B8

### UPSTATE



### DHEC investigation

The S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control is investigating after a Bolling Springs woman said she was served undercooked meat at a fast-food restaurant. C1

### NATION



### Busy year for parks

Many of the country's most prominent national parks, including Grand Canyon, Yellowstone and Zion, set visitation records in 2015 and are bracing for what could be an even busier new year. A3

### Nuclear warning

Late in a life lived unconvincingly near the nuclear abyss, former defense secretary William J. Perry is on a mission to warn of a "real and growing danger" of nuclear doom. A3

### Cleveland officers still in jeopardy

### 'AFLUENZA' CASE

## Officials: Flight to Mexico planned

By Emily Schmeil  
and E. Eduardo Castillo  
The Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — A teen fugitive who's known for using an "affluenza" defense and his mother attempted to disguise themselves and disappear among the American tourists thronging a Mexican resort city for the holidays, but are now in custody and will be returned to the U.S., authorities said Tuesday.

Tarrant County Sheriff Dee Anderson said 18-year-old Ethan Couch — who was on

juvenile probation after killing four people in a drunken driving wreck — and his mother had prepared to be gone a while, even dyeing Couch's blond hair black, before being detained Monday in the Pacific Coast city of Puerto Vallarta.

"They had planned to disappear. They even had something that was almost akin to a going-away party before leaving town," Anderson said. He would not give details about the event, including how many people attended.

During the sentencing phase of Couch's trial, a defense



Ethan Couch



Tonya Couch

expert argued that his wealthy parents coddled him into a sense of irresponsibility — a condition the expert termed "affluenza." The condition is not recognized as a medical diagnosis by the American

Psychiatric Association, and its invocation drew ridicule.

Couch disappeared as authorities investigated whether he had violated the terms of his probation.

Anderson said Couch and his mother, Tonya Couch, apparently crossed the border in her pickup and drove to Puerto Vallarta. It was not clear whether they had any accomplices.

No immediate charges were planned for others who may have known about or assisted with the flight plan, Anderson

SEE AFLUENZA, A8

### EXPLORING SPARTANBURG COUNTY



A P-51 Mustang on display at the Triple Tree Aerodrome museum in Woodruff. PHOTOS BY JOHN BYRUM/JGHN. BYRUM@SHI.COM

## Unique experiences await in small-town Woodruff

By Alyssa Mulliger  
alyssa.mulliger@shj.com

Chartered in 1874, the city of Woodruff blends a historic mill village with a growing number of locally owned establishments, renovated greenspaces with multi-use trails and one-of-a-kind



### ELECTION 2016

## Gowdy's backing of Rubio gets mixed reviews

Analysts: Could help attract undecided voters

By Chris Lavender  
chris.lavender@shj.com

Views are mixed on what impact South Carolina Rep. Trey Gowdy's endorsement of Republican presidential candidate Marco Rubio will have on the race.

Gowdy endorsed Rubio during a campaign stop Tuesday in Clinton, Iowa.

It wasn't the first campaign stop where Gowdy expressed his support for the Florida senator. They appeared together at Cribb's Kitchen in Spartanburg on Dec. 19. That was Rubio's first campaign stop in Spartanburg since announcing his plans to run for the White House.

"Usually, I don't think endorsements mean a great



Gowdy





**PANORAMA**

# Pose for effect

Interactive exhibition at Patriot Hall puts students in the great masterpieces **C1**

# Sheriff seeks info in southside shooting

**FROM STAFF REPORTS**

Sumter County Sheriff's Office is seeking information regarding a shooting that occurred Tuesday afternoon leaving one man hospitalized with multiple gunshot wounds.

At about 2 p.m., officers received a call of shots fired inside a building at 610 B Manning Ave. and discovered the 37-year-old male victim upon arrival, according to a news release from the sheriff's office.

The victim was transported to Tuomey Regional Medical Center by

Sumter County Emergency Medical Services for treatment and was in stable condition as of Tuesday evening, according to Major Allen Duiley.

Upon a preliminary investigation, witnesses said they heard numerous gunshots in the incident location and saw two unidentified black males running away from the scene.

The investigation is ongoing and anyone with information is asked to contact Sumter County Sheriff's Office at (803) 436-2000 or CrimeStoppers at (803) 722-1100.



Sumter County Emergency Medical Services prepares to load a patient in an ambulance in the 600 block of South Manning Avenue on Tuesday afternoon.

BOB CARPENTIER/THE SUMTER ITEM

# Drinking safely for New Year

## Police stepping up checkpoints

BY ADRIENNE SARVIS

adrienne@theitem.com

With 2016 right around the corner, local law enforcement agencies encourage area residents to be safe and responsible on the roads while ringing in the new year.

Sumter Police Department Public Information Officer Tonya McGirt said officers will have extra patrols and check points on New Year's Eve.

She said the department will be working alongside Sumter County Sheriff's Office and South Carolina Highway Patrol to monitor the roadways.

The goal is to have zero fatalities, McGirt said.

She encourages those planning to celebrate the holiday on Thursday night to have a designated driver.

The designated driver should be someone who does not drink at all that night, she said.

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, almost 30 Americans die every day as a result of vehicle wrecks involving an impaired driver.

Between 2002 and 2012, 3,870 people were killed in wrecks involving drunk drivers in South Carolina, according to the CDC.

The CDC's website states

# Christmas a perfect time for a ... car wash?



Dakota Williams, 10, plays in the foam generated while washing the family's car on Christmas Day. All over Sumter, self-wash car washes had lines of cars waiting.

KEITH GARDNER/THE SUMTER ITEM





**ORANGE BOWL** Pair of up-and-coming coaches to drive teams. **Page 1D**

# Morning News

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 30, 2015

**TODAY'S WEATHER**

Periods of rain and storms, warm and humid  
High 78 Low 62

DETAILS 2A

www.scnw.com

The Voice of the Pee Dee

75 cents



Four Hemingway players — Steven Palmer (14), Boris Taylor (11), LaClifford Washington (32) and Jaquan Julius (42) — get ready for a rebound Tuesday afternoon during a 64-59 victory over Johnsonville on the second day of the Pepsi Carolina Classic at West Florence High School.

## Ready or not

**FLORENCE** — It's 10 games down and 10 to go midway through the four-day, 12-team Pepsi Carolina Classic boys' high school basketball tournament at West Florence High School.

The championship game will be played at 6:15 p.m. Thursday. For complete coverage, see Sports on Pages 1D and 3D. See photo galleries at [scnw.com](http://scnw.com).



Jalen Cameron (right) welcomes starting teammate Bryson Williams to the court prior to the game against Lake City during the second day of the Pepsi Carolina Classic.

### PEPSI CAROLINA CLASSIC

Today's games at West Florence High School

- 12:30 p.m.: Florence Christian vs. Johnsonville
- 2:15 p.m.: Hartsville vs. Trinity Byrnes
- 4 p.m.: Cheraw vs. Lake City
- 5:45 p.m.: South Florence vs. Oreshwood
- 7:30 p.m.: North Augusta vs. West Florence

## Florence District One partnership provides teachers content, support

BY MELISSA ROLLINS  
Morning News  
mrollins@florencenews.com

**FLORENCE**—Florence School District One will begin delving into a new educational partnership in 2016. During the December board meeting, Trustees heard about the type of innovation they can expect to see in the coming years.

Teachers and administrators throughout the district volunteered to be part of the first wave of local educators to partner with Discovery Education, a professional development program for teachers in K-12 classrooms.

Discovery Education provides teachers with digital content to use in their classrooms. Integrating technology and keeping students engaged, Andy Schaefer, Vice President of Discovery Education US, said that the company is focused on innovation.

"We really got our start helping school districts convert to a more digital learning environment back in the late 90's when we set out to change the way that video was used in the classroom," Schaefer said. "With those goals in mind we launched United Streaming, a service that has been used by every school in South Carolina."

Though the name has changed, the vision has remained the same: enhance the student learning experience.

"A few years ago we set out to change what people thought of the textbook, a core instructional tool," Schaefer said.

See **EDUCATION**, Page 3A

## Biggest Loser registration remains open

BY SHAMIRA MCGRAY  
Morning News  
smcgray@florencenews.com

**FLORENCE**—Registration for Florence's Biggest Loser will continue through Tuesday. Rachel Baggett, United Way of Florence County director of marketing and initiatives, said the 10-week weight-loss, healthy-lifestyle competition sought 80 participants. There are 15 spots left.

Florence's Biggest Loser will lead participants through several activities, including a training session with the Francis Marion University men's basketball team, a Kayak Attack competition and a healthy pitluck meal to encourage the contestant's family members to also lead a healthy lifestyle, among other activities.

"We're also going to do a mentor night where I'm going to have past contestants come and answer questions and talk about their experiences in the program," Baggett said.

Thirteen past contestants have signed up to compete again in this year's biggest loser competition.

Twelve certified trainers from the McLeod Health and Fitness Center will assist Florence's Biggest Loser contestants throughout the competition. Incentives will be available to keep contestants motivated throughout the competition.

## Labor Day Southern 500 top sports story

Sixth of nine parts

BY SAM BUNNY  
Morning News  
sbunney@florencenews.com

When NASCAR announced in 2014 that the Darlington Southern 500 at Darlington Raceway would return to Labor Day weekend this year, there was an instant feeling of



### INSIDE

For the Pee Dee's top five sports stories from 2015  
See **Page 3A**.





# The Beaufort Gazette

WEDNESDAY, December 30, 2015

[beaufortgazette.com](http://beaufortgazette.com)

Established in 1897 75 cents

IN DOWNTOWN BEAUFORT

## Parking changes start Monday

The changes to time limits, the enforcement period and meter charges are a part of a task force's recommendations.

By MATT McNAB  
[mattmcnab@islandpacket.com](mailto:mattmcnab@islandpacket.com)  
843-706-8125

Shoppers heading to downtown Beaufort stores should plan on arriving slightly earlier and on moving the car more often after new parking changes take effect next week.

And in some places, they'll pay more to park, but less in others.

The city announced Tuesday a host of changes to its metered parking that will begin Monday — chief among them, a later enforcement period, which will begin at 11 a.m. and end at 7 p.m. The current enforcement period is 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

In addition to the time change, metered spaces on Bay Street and side streets between Bay and Port

Please see PARKING on 7A.

### TRUMP'S VISIT: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The leading Republican presidential candidate will hold a campaign rally at 11 a.m. today at the Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa.

Those with reserved tickets will be shuttled to the hotel from the old community park at Shelter Cove Towne Centre.

Shuttle service will begin at 8 a.m., and doors at the hotel for the event will open at 9:30 a.m. Shuttles will run back to the shopping center as long as required after the event to return attendees to their cars, organizers said.

Attendees should print off a ticket or be prepared to show it on a mobile device at check-in.

For those who cannot attend, follow along with The Beaufort Gazette's live coverage throughout the day at [www.beaufortgazette.com](http://www.beaufortgazette.com).



### HOW HOT WAS IT?

While the National Weather Service in Charleston doesn't keep historical records for specific areas around Beaufort County, here are the recent record-breaking temperatures as recorded by gauges at the Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport:

DEC. 24

HIGH OF  
**83**  
DEGREES

Record broken:  
80 degrees  
in 1931

DEC. 25

HIGH OF  
**82**  
DEGREES

Record broken:  
80 degrees  
in 2008

DEC. 26

HIGH OF  
**82**  
DEGREES

Record broken:  
79 degrees  
in 1987

DEC. 27

HIGH OF  
**80**  
DEGREES

Record broken:  
79 degrees  
in 1987

DEC. 28

HIGH OF  
**82**  
DEGREES

Record broken:  
80 degrees  
in 2014

## Temps put nature 'into a tizzy'

Plants that would ordinarily be bare are blooming, and critters that would be hibernating are slithering around



DELAUNA EARLEY • Staff photo

Azaleas are shown in full bloom on Tuesday at a home on North Street in Beaufort. The flower typically blooms only in the spring.

By LUCAS HIGH • [lhigh@islandpacket.com](mailto:lhigh@islandpacket.com) • 843-706-8028

Every day since Christmas Eve, a new high-temperature record has been set in Beaufort County.

The warmer-than-usual weather has "sent nature into a tizzy," Margie Fox, owner of The Garden Gate Nursery in Bluffton, said Tuesday.

blooming, and critters that would be hibernating are slithering around, experts say.

"It's kind of a tricky situation," Fox said. "The unseasonably warm weather triggers plants to do things they aren't ready to do yet."

**MORE INSIDE**  
Parts of the U.S. are getting slammed by unusual winter

Brian Symmes

Cell: 803-673-9437

Office: 803-734-0304